

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 11-14, 16, 17, 21 and 22 are in the case. Claims 1, 2, 11-13, 16, 17 and 22 have been amended to more clearly point out the invention. Also, the specification has been amended by inserting the brief description of the drawings. All the amendments are supported by the original disclosure; for example, it is clear that the drawing element 2 shows a flow meter and elements 17, 20 and 21 show valves in Figure 1. No new matter has been introduced. Claims 6, 8-10, 15, and 18-20 have been canceled to expedite prosecution of the present application. The claim cancellations do not represent acquiescence in the Examiner's rejections and are made to expedite prosecution of the present application. Applicant reserves the right to resubmit the original claims in, for example, a continuation application. Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of the subject application in view of the following remarks.

I. Objection to the Disclosure

The disclosure was objected to because: (1) the specification fails to contain a brief description of the drawings; and (2) drawing elements 2, 16, 17, 20 and 21 have not been described in the specification.

In response, Applicant proposes deletion of drawing element numbers 17, 20 and 21 from Figure 1. As to elements 2 and 16, Applicant has amended the disclosure. Therefore, the objection is moot.

II. Claims 1, 3-5, 14, 16, 17, and 21 were allowed

Applicant gratefully acknowledged that claims 1, 3-5, 14, 16, 17, and 21 were allowed.

III. Claims 2, 12-13 and 22 are allowable

Claims 2, 6, 8-13, 15, 18-20 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

As to claims 6, 8-10, 15 and 18-20, the rejection is moot since the claims have been canceled.

As to claims 2, 12-13 and 22, Applicant has amended the claims and believes that the claims are in the condition of allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of all of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that all of the rejections have been overcome and the claims are now in condition for allowance, early notice of which would be appreciated.

No other fee except that for the extension of time is believed due for the submission of this response. Should any fee be due, please charge it to Deposit Account No. 16-1150.

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendix A

Application No.: 09/456,588
Attorney Docket No.: 2988-0700

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Marked-Up Versions Of All Revised Paragraphs In The Disclosure

The paragraph starting at line 22, page 6:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a diagram which depicts an arrangement of devices for a process of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

It has now been found that this drawback can
[DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION]
be avoided by drying a stream of F32 produced continuously, within a specific temperature range, and by carrying out, in particular, a specific process for regenerating the sieve feed stock.

The paragraph starting at line 11, page 13:

EXAMPLES [AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS]

The examples which follow are given purely for the purpose of non-limiting illustration of the process according to the invention.

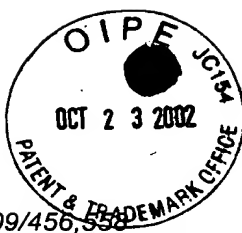
The paragraph starting line 10, page 14:

The dry gas then passes through a buffer reservoir with a volume of 5 litres (15), from which it is sent,

with the aid of a membrane pump (1) **and a flow meter (2)**, to a humidifier composed of a column of glass beads (3) and a plunger (4) which introduces liquid water into the system at a flow rate of 0.4 ml/h, such that the stream of dried F32 is again humidified to the abovementioned value of 4100 ppm of water. After this humidification and passage into a homogenization tank (5), the stream returns to the drier (6).

The paragraph starting line 23, page 15:

A stream of helium is then circulated, for 2 hours at room temperature, in the drying tube (6), the aim of this operation being to remove the F32 remaining between the granules of the molecular sieve feed stock. **An auxiliary dryer (16) may be connected as shown in Figure 1.**



Appendix B

Application No.: 09/456,558
Attorney Docket No.: 2988-0700

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Marked-Up Versions Of All Revised Claims

1. (Four times amended) A process for drying wet F32, which comprises placing a stream of the said F32 in continuous contact with a feed stock of a composition comprising a molecular sieve selected from a 3A, 4A or 5A type sieve, at a first temperature of between 5 and 78°C, and at a first pressure of between 0.6 and 25 atm,

wherein the sieve feed stock is regenerated by the process which consists in passing a stream of an inert gas over the feed stock, at a second pressure at about atmospheric pressure:

(i) at a second temperature between 70°C and 170°C, for the time required to remove at least 80%, of the initial amount of F32 absorbed in the feed stock, and then

(ii) at [another] a third temperature between 180°C and 300°C, for the time required to remove at least 90%, of the initial amount of water absorbed in the feed stock.

2. (Thrice Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the stream of F32 to be dried is a stream of gas, and the first pressure is between 0.6 and 10 atm.

11. (Twice Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the first temperature is room temperature.

12. (Twice Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the first pressure is between 0.8 and 17 atm.

13. (Twice Amended) The process according to claim 2, wherein the first pressure is between 0.8 and 5 atm.

16. (Thrice Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the **second** temperature **[(i)]** is between 80°C and 165°C and at least 90% of the initial amount of F32 absorbed in the feed stock is removed.

17. (Thrice Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the **third** temperature **[(ii)]** is between 190°C and 250°C and at least 95% of the initial amount of F32 absorbed in the feed stock is removed.

22. (Once Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the inert **[h]**gas is helium.